

**"Celebrating 30 Years of Small Business Success"**



**November 10, 2014**



**NOTE:** In celebration of all those who have served our great country the DCEO Offices will be closed on Tuesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, Veterans Day.

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### **Shop Small – Small Business Saturday**

Small Business Saturday will once again be held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, November 29<sup>th</sup>. You can get additional information about Small Business Saturday from the American Express [SHOP SMALL website](#). You can also download information, draft announcements, logos and other information from the [SHOP SMALL resources page](#).



## **Spotlight on Success – More Polish Pottery**

Rebecca Gengler, owner and founder of More Polish Pottery in Big Rock, IL, started her "love affair" with Polish pottery as a military wife stationed in Germany. She collected the pottery and dreamed of starting her own business. She quickly recognized that Polish pottery was not just another stoneware piece, but something of high artisan quality. Illinois' large ethnic Polish population convinced her the dream was attainable.

In 2011, Mr. and Mrs. Gengler purchased a five acre property in Big Rock which conveniently included an oversized garage and hoop greenhouse. These were turned into a showroom and stocked with an initial order of Ceramika Artstyczna Polish pottery made. Her business immediately attracted a following and she kept reinvesting in inventory to keep up with demand. More Polish Pottery now boasts the largest retail selection of these unique pieces in the northern Midwest.



Referrals have been an integral part of her success. Mrs. Gengler gives private presentations both at the shop and at woman's groups, showcasing the Polish artists, her products and experiences as a small business owner.

Mrs. Gengler first sought assistance from the **Illinois Small Business Development Center at Waubensee Community College** in 2011 to help develop a business plan and focus her efforts. She also attended SBDC round tables and presentations where she connected with other small business owners. Here she learned money saving tips used

during the start-up process, networked with other wholesalers and retailers, discovered smart, inexpensive marketing techniques and ways to create business wholesale packages.

"With so many businesses that come and go, I wanted to ensure that my business plan matched my enthusiasm for sharing a product that I have believed in for so long. Our business continues to grow beyond our expectations and we look forward to continued education through the SBDC as we hire more employees, expand further into wholesale and retail markets, and stay on the cutting edge of trends in technology and marketing. We have learned so much . . . and we are confident that we have amazing resources at our fingertips as we continue to learn for long-term growth and expansion."

Ms. Gengler recently added staff and continues to grow her business. **Harriet Parker**, her advisor at the **Illinois Small Business Center at Waubensee Community College** recently nominated More Polish Pottery for the 2014 Entrepreneurial Excellence Awards. On September 15, 2014 Ms. Gengler won in the Early Growth category.

More Polish Pottery is located at 8S953 Jericho Rd. in Big Rock, IL. Learn more and view patterns and pieces on the [website](#), or call (630) 605-2371 for more information. You may also give her a 'Thumbs Up' on Facebook at [More Polish Pottery](#)

## **Maximizing Neoserra – Viewing Client Activity**

All Neoserra users can now see all client activity. Users can NOT edit any activity records; only view them. Users should NEVER change the client profile (also called the client detail) of a client that belongs to another center. If you think a revision is needed you MUST contact Tom Becker at 217/558-6303 or [tom.becker@illinois.gov](mailto:tom.becker@illinois.gov) and Tom will make any needed changes.

## **Valued Resources – SBA Resource Guides**

Please contact Business Information Center if you would like to receive the newest SBA Resource Guide for Small Business. They can be reached at 800/252-2923 or request publications via on their "Submit a Question" page at:

<http://www.illinois.gov/dceo/SmallBizAssistance/BeginHere/Pages/BIC-Contact.aspx>

## **Network News and Moves**

**Zero Fees Will Continue** - SBA Will Continue to Zero Out Fees on Small Dollar Loans, Expands Relief for Larger Loans to Vets. The U.S Small Business Administration has announced that fee relief on 7(a) loans of \$150,000 or less implemented last year and originally slated to expire on Sept. 30, will be extended through fiscal year 2015. SBA has also announced that fee relief measures for SBA Veterans Advantage will also be renewed as well as enhanced. See attached to read the entire notice.

## **America's SBDC Network Connect**

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to see the November 6, 2014 edition of [America's SBDC Network Connect Newsletter](#).

## **Shop Small Infographic**

# WHEN YOU SHOP SMALL® IT CAN LEAD TO BIG THINGS

THE SHOP SMALL MOVEMENT MAKES AN IMPACT ON NEIGHBORHOODS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

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The **WEEKLY CONNECTION** is distributed by the Illinois SBDC and DCEO Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology each Monday to members of the DCEO Illinois SBDC Network to provide the service delivery partners with regular updates on small business issues, opportunities and resources. You may send any information to share with the Illinois SBDC Network to [Tom.Becker@illinois.gov](mailto:Tom.Becker@illinois.gov). Please feel free to forward this update to other interested resource providers and key stakeholders.  
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